

December 8, 2005

TO: Amy Cameron
RE: CAHSEE Exit Exam
From: [REDACTED]

We are the parents of a Resource Student who may be denied a High School Diploma and the opportunity to obtain a post secondary education diploma.

It is our belief that the decisions regarding awarding of a High School Diploma should be returned to the School Districts. We are in support of an Equivalent Based Model based on rigorous standards for Math and English. This alternative model summarized by Joe Behm (included below) a representative of the Learning Disabilities Association satisfies the standards that are included in the CAHSEE exam. I am inserting into my letter parts of the recommendation and ask that the State Board of Education consider this alternative solution which can enacted quickly and will give the graduating class of 2006 the diploma that they have worked so hard to obtain over the last 4 years.

The most appropriate, sensible, expedient, cost-effective and equivalent alternate to the CAHSEE is a course equivalent model which can immediately [or ASAP] grant local school districts the authority to award standard diplomas if seniors pass required rigorous standards-based core ELA and math courses upon which the CAHSEE is also based. Passing 4 ELA and 2-3 math courses [which include Algebra I standards] is more than equivalent to the CAHSEE---it is a superior measurement of student standards-based academic achievement. This alternative provides evidence of CAHSEE equivalent standards based achievement in ELA and Math spanning 12-14 semesters, netting 60-70 required graduation credits. The CAHSEE alone is an artifact created under stress without benefit of linguistic alterations, real-life drafts and edits, or modern computerized versions. By contrast, the course equivalent alternative provides considerably more reliable evidence to gauge academic achievement, graduation eligibility and predict college and workplace aptitude and vital personal traits that cannot be measured with a test. Overall, the course equivalent alternative is much more informative and also meets the litmus test of multiple measures since a variety of courses, teachers, methodology, projects, exams, and technology converge to determine grades.

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Respectfully

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